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EXPLANATORY DEFENCE

OF THE

ESTIMATE, &c.



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AN
EXPLANATORY DEFENCE
OF THE
ESTIMATE
OF THE
MANNERS
AND
PRINCIPLES
OF THE
TIMES.

BEING

An APPENDIX to that Work, occasioned by the
Clamours lately raised against it among certain
Ranks of Men.

WRITTEN

By the AUTHOR of the ESTIMATE, in a
Series of Letters to a noble FRIEND.

LONDON:

Printed for L. DAVIS and C. REYMERS, against
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AN
EXPLANATORY TREATISE
OF THE
ESTIMATES
OF THE
MAYNERS
AND
BUTCHERS
OF THE
TOWN OF
LONDON
IN THE
YEAR 1758
BY
JAMES BUTCHER
OF THE TOWN OF LONDON
WRITTEN
BY
JAMES BUTCHER
OF THE TOWN OF LONDON
LONDON
Printed by J. Davis and Co. Stationers, in Pall Mall
1758

AN
EXPLANATORY DEFENCE
OF THE
ESTIMATE, &c.

LETTER I.

My LORD,

THAT Friendship with which you
have so long honoured me, was
never more clearly proved, or more
nobly exercised, than in the free and candid
Account you lately gave me, of some Ex-
ceptions

ceptions taken against the Estimate, among certain Ranks of Men in Town, more particularly on the Publication of the second Volume, and since the Author's Retirement into the Country.

THIS Intelligence hath indeed alarmed the Writer ; and set him to review his Work with greater Circumspection even than that with which he writ it. 'Tis certain, that no Man can expect to hear the frank Opinions of the World, from the World itself. 'Tis, therefore, an Office of the truest Friendship in your Lordship to communicate all you have heard on this Subject. The Objections which you have so fairly stated, I shall answer in their Order ; and with equal Pleasure *vindicate*, where I think myself *right* ; or *retract*, where I am *wrong*.

ON

ON this Occasion, your Lordship may expect a Series of Letters. This Method will equally alleviate *my* Trouble in *writing*, and *yours* in *reading*.

L E T T E R II.

BEFORE I proceed to your Objections, you will give me Leave, my Lord, briefly to state the main Intent or Scheme of the Estimate ; in such a Manner as may prove a Sort of general Key to the Objections you have made. For I perceive plainly that many of them proceed from a mere Inattention to, or a total Misunderstanding of the leading Principles of the Work.

AND that I may give your Lordship a just Idea of its main Design, I will give you a short Account of the accidental *Rise* and *Occasion* of this Work ; the leading Principles of which, are indeed no more

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than

than a small Part of a much larger Design, of a much more extensive Nature.

THE Writer being convinced both from Books and Observation, that the Happiness and Duration of States depends much less on mere Law and external Institution, and much more on the internal Force of Manners and Principles than hath been commonly imagined ; and being of Opinion, that the fundamental and leading Causes of the Happiness and Duration of States had not as yet been enquired into or pointed out, with that Particularity of Proof, Circumstance and Illustration, which so important a Subject might demand ; had for some Time bent his Thoughts on a Design of considerable Extent, which might be called “ A History and Analysis
“ of Manners and Principles in their several Periods.” His general Plan begins with the Examination of *savage Life*, and

proceeds through the several intermediate Periods of *rude, simple, civilized, polished, effeminate, corrupt, profligate*, to that of final DECLENSION and RUIN.

IN the Course of this Plan (too extensive, indeed, for the Mediocrity of the Writer's Talents) a Diversity of Circumstances, almost infinite, have presented themselves. The Rise, Changes, and Progress of Commerce, Arts, Science, Religion, Laws; their mutual Influence, and Effects on each other, and on Manners and Principles; the Characters, Virtues and Vices of Rank, Office, and Profession, in each of the Periods thus delineated; the natural Means by which these Periods generate each other; the Advantages and Disadvantages, Strengths and Weaknesses, which mark and distinguish these several Periods; the most practicable Means of

bringing forward the savage and rude Periods towards polished Life, and of bringing back the effeminate and corrupt Periods to the same salutary Medium ; above all, the Regulation and strong Establishment of Manners and Principles to this important End ;---these, with other subordinate Articles of Research, proved and illustrated by Facts drawn from History, form the Substance of the Writer's general Design.

ON this Design he was intent, when the War broke out between BRITAIN and FRANCE ; which being very unsuccessful in its Beginnings, on the Part of BRITAIN ; he thought he could not, in his private Station, do a better Service to his Country, than in pointing out what to him appeared the fundamental and *latent Causes* of this ill Success. To this End he singled out so much of his main Design, as immediately
related

related to the present State of his own Times and Cōuntry ; endeavouring to convince his Fellow Citizens, that “ the Source
 “ of our public Miscarriages did not lie
 “ merely in the particular and incidental
 “ Misconduct of Individuals ; but in great
 “ Part in the prevailing Character of *that*
 “ *Period in which we live* ; that is, in the
 “ *Manners and Principles of the Times.*”

HENCE alone, the Estimate had its accidental Birth : Let it be chiefly remembered then, that the main Subject of this Estimate is solely “ the Effects of present
 “ Manners and Principles on the Duration
 “ of the State.” This the Writer insisted on so strongly, and repeated so often, that he thought his Readers would certainly carry it along with them : yet he finds, he was mistaken.

THE leading Truths, therefore, which in the Course of his Work he has attempted to prove, are these ; That exorbitant Trade hath produced exorbitant Wealth ; that this hath naturally produced a high Degree of Luxury, and a general Attention to pleasurable Enjoyment *among the higher Ranks*, among whom the Effects of Luxury must of course *first* appear. That these natural Effects of Wealth have been naturally attended with public Consequences which tend to the weakening or Dissolution of the State, by turning that general Attention upon *pleasurable Enjoyment*, which in simpler Times was bent on Views of *Duty*. That hence, a general Defect of Capacity, Fortitude, and Principle, did naturally rise ; such as, in its End, must be fatal, if unchecked in its Progress : and that all the leading Ranks were of course infected with these natural

Con-

Consequences, in some Degree or other, from their very Situation.

THAT another Evil hath conspired with this ; and that as this arose from the Abuse of Wealth, so the other was inflamed by this, and arose from the Abuse of Liberty. That our Constitution, excellent in its Nature, was liable to an Abuse, which arose even from its Excellence. That the Principle of *parliamentary Influence* which was thought or found necessary at the Revolution in Eighty-eight, as a new Principle of Government, had conspired with the Luxury and ruling Manners of the Times, to weaken the national Powers, by raising many Men to Places of the most important Trust, who were in some Respect or other unequal to the Task : And hence the accumulated Danger to the Stability of the Commonwealth.

THIS

THIS is the main Outline of the Author's Design, strip'd of that Particularity and Variety of colouring, which it was necessary to give it, ere it could be made a just and striking Picture of the Times. All that circumstantial Delineation of the ruling Character of each Rank, Condition, Order, or Profession of Men, being indeed no more than what the Writer intended as a Proof in Detail, of these general Principles.

THE Reception which the Work hath met with in the World, is a Proof sufficient, how thoroughly the main Body of the Nation is convinced of the general Truth and Utility of the Plan. As to the Execution of it; whoever considers the Nature of the Work; and that in the Course of particular Proof, it was necessary to speak with uncommon Freedom concerning the real State of all Ranks and Orders
of

of Men, will easily see that Numbers must be displeased at a Freedom which was perhaps *new*, but which the very Genius of the Work rendered *necessary*.

WHAT Foundation this particular Displeasure of Individuals may have had in Reason, and what in Passion and Self-Partiality, I will now calmly consider; in weighing those Objections which your Lordship hath laid before me.

L E T T E R III.

YOU say, my Lord, that “ many good
 “ and well meaning People have taken
 “ Offence, as being involved in the blame-
 “ able Manners of the Times, and there-
 “ fore charged with Guilt, as the Enemies
 “ of their Country, while they are not con-
 “ scious of acting *intentionally amiss*.”—

IN

IN reply to this, my Lord, let me briefly quote my Vindication from some Passages in the Book itself. “ It is not affirmed
 “ or imply’d, in this general Review, that
 “ every Individual hath assumed the Garb
 “ and Character of false Delicacy.—As in
 “ manly Ages, some will be effeminate,
 “ so, in effeminate Times, the manly
 “ Character will be found.”——But from
 “ the general Combination of Manners
 “ and Principles, in every Period of Time,
 “ will always result one ruling and predom-
 “ inant Character *.”

YET altho’ it be true, that the Character of guilty Effeminacy belongs not to all ; it seems to the Writer, that none are exempt from some Degree or other of those ruling Manners, which, when indulged beyond a certain Degree, constitute the Character of guilty Effeminacy. He cannot acquit his

* Vol. 1. p. 65.

best and worthiest Friends of some Participation with the Defects of their Time and Country. Nor doth he pretend to be exempt from them himself. Alas, if he did, he must be the blindest and most self-ignorant of all Mortals ! These Manners are, in a certain Degree, in-wrought into our very Nature by the Force of early Habit ; then become, as it were, a Part of us : and we might as well attempt to divest ourselves of the Modes of Speech, as of the Modes of Thought and Action which are peculiar to our Time and Country *.

THUS, as no Period is without its Defects, so by early Habit, we are all necessarily doomed to a Participation of these Defects. Hence, all Characters are imper-

* Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be,
 Few in th' extreme, but all in the Degree :
 The Rogue and Fool by Fits is fair and wise ;
 And ev'n the best, by Fits, what they despise.
fect ;

fect; not only from their internal Frame and Passions; but from their external Habits of Education. But where the Scales fairly preponderate on the Side of Reason and Virtue; there, tho' the Character be *imperfect*, it is not *vicious*.

NAY, not only the worthiest are in some Degree necessarily tainted with the ruling Errors of the Times; but I will go a Step further, my Lord, and affirm, “ that Men
 “ may be involved in the Manners of the
 “ Times, to a Degree that is even pernicious, and yet not be justly stigmatized
 “ as immoral or unworthy Characters, so
 “ as to become justly the Objects of Hatred or Detestation.”

To prove that I am not cooking up a new System in my own Defence, different from the Principles of the Estimate, I must again have Recourse to the Estimate itself.

The

The following Paragraph is decisive. “ Se-
 “ veral Habits, Qualities, and Actions,
 “ which seem innocent in themselves, as
 “ they affect or influence *private* Life, are
 “ equally or more hurtful than others of a
 “ more odious Appearance, if we con-
 “ sider them as they affect the *public*
 “ Strength and Welfare. This comes to
 “ pass, because the ill Consequences of some
 “ Actions are *immediate* ; of others, more
 “ *distant*. The first strike the *Imagination*,
 “ and are seen by all : The latter must be
 “ traced up to their Causes by the Use of
 “ *Reason* ; and to do this, exceeds the Ta-
 “ lents of the Many*.”

GIVE the Author Leave now, my Lord,
 to apply this Truth fairly and candidly in
 his own Defence : A Use, which he little
 dreamt, when he writ it, that he should
 ever have Occasion to apply it to.

* Vol. II. p. 173.

WHEN,

WHEN, therefore, the Author charged his Contemporaries with indulging Manners pernicious to the public Welfare, he never intended to charge ALL who thus indulged them, with any designed Immorality or Guilt. These Manners, it appears, do not necessarily imply an immoral Character, in the strictest Sense ; because, tho' they be attended with distant Consequences which are bad, nay perhaps fatal, yet these Consequences are not always perceived or suspected by those who are involved in them. There is, in this Case, no Idea, no Suspicion of any Violation of Duty ; the Consequences are perhaps too distant to be seen by every Eye ; and therefore, strictly speaking, no moral Guilt or Demerit can arise. Yet these Manners (to cite another Passage which may convince you that the Writer's Defence is built on his first Principles) “ tho' in Appearance
 “ they are too trite to merit Notice, and
 “ too

“ too trifling for Rebuke, may in their
 “ Tendency be as fatal to the Stability of a
 “ Nation, as Maxims and Manners more
 “ apparently flagitious *.”

Now, these Manners, my Lord, which
 are thus fraught with hidden and unseen
 Mischiefs, ought surely to be laid open in
 all their Consequences, no less than Man-
 ners more apparently flagitious. Nay,
 there is indeed the greater Necessity for
 such a Developement, because without it,
 even the worthy and well-intentioned may
 be drawn in, while they suspect no such
 Consequence, to adopt a System of Man-
 ners destructive to their Country.

LET the following Paragraph (apply'd,
 indeed, in the Book itself to a different
 Purpose) serve as a concurrent Proof of
 what is here asserted. “ The more trite

* Vol. I. p. 29.

C

“ and

“ and trifling the Facts may seem, the
 “ more their Consequences are likely to
 “ escape Notice : For Attention is natu-
 “ rally fixed only on Things of manifest
 “ Importance. Now, if indeed, notwith-
 “ standing this, they be in their Tendency
 “ as fatal to the Stability of a Nation, as
 “ Maxims and Manners more apparently
 “ flagitious ; then it may be not only a
 “ Task of some Importance, but of some
 “ Delicacy too, to trace them to their
 “ Consequences and Sources *.”

THIS, my Lord, may be called the *second Degree*, in which the Writer esteems his Country very generally infected with that System of Manners, which he hath attempted to disgrace. But neither in this Degree, does he think that moral Guilt is chargeable on the Delinquents ; nor did he ever charge them with it, so as to en-

* Vol. II. p. 54.

deavour

endeavour to render Individuals the Objects of Hatred and Detestation.

BUT there is a *third Degree* of Degeneracy, which the Writer esteems the proper Object of severe Censure and Reproof; and that is “ When thro’ a determined Pursuit of Gain or Pleasure, manifest ill Consequences are willfully overlooked; and seasonable Admonitions neglected; or when these Consequences are seen, and Admonitions attended to; yet deliberately despised, and set at Defiance.” Now this Degree of Degeneracy, my Lord, the Author believes and hopes, is not very common: Indeed, the very Tenor of his Work, the very essential Principles on which he set out, imply and affirm the contrary. For if this had been the Representation he had designed to make of his Times and Country, he must have regarded and branded them as *profligate*. Now so

far from this, that he hath expressly affirmed, as a fundamental Principle of his Work, that the Character of the Times is NOT that of profligacy. “ The flightest
 “ Observation, if attended with Impartiality,
 “ may convince us, that the Character of
 “ the Manners of this Age and Nation, is
 “ by no means that of abandoned Wickedness and Profligacy. This Degree of
 “ Degeneracy, indeed, is often imputed †
 “ to the Times ; but to what Times hath
 “ it not been imputed ?” Again : “ If the
 “ previous Estimate, already given, be just ;
 “ if the Spirit of Liberty, Humanity, and
 “ Equity, be in a certain Degree yet left
 “ among us, some of the most essential
 “ Foundations of abandoned Wickedness
 “ and Profligacy can have no Place *.”

YET, my Lord, tho’ these atrocious Crimes have no Place among us, so as to

† Vol. I. p. 26.

* Ib. p. 28.

form

form the Character of a People, the Writer can entertain no Doubt, but there are Characters in every Rank and Station of Life, who may justly deserve the Style of *profligate*. This is often supposed, in the Course of the Estimate; these Characters, with their Effects on the public Welfare, are incidentally touched on: But as the general Tenor and Complexion of the Work supposes, that the general Character of the Times is totally different from this; no candid Reader, sure, will charge the Writer with imputing this Profligacy to any particular Character, unless where it is PARTICULARLY AFFIRMED and IMPUTED.

L E T T E R IV.

SUCH, then, my Lord, is the general Foundation of the Writer's main Defence: A Defence which, if every one had known his Sentiments of Men and
C 3 Things,

Things, as well as your Lordship, he is persuaded he never could have had Occasion to make. And he hath only to apply these general Principles of Defence, to all those Ranks, Conditions, Orders, and Professions, which he hath scrutinized in his Estimate, in order to clear himself of this capital Objection.

THUS, when he affirms, that the leading Ranks in general are infected with the Manners of the Times, he means not to charge the leading Ranks with a general Profligacy or deliberate Guilt. He believes them involved, from their Situation, in a System of Manners, and in very various Degrees of these Manners, which, if not attended to, and curbed in their Excess, will soon or late endanger the Stability of the Commonwealth. But he believes, at the same Time, nay, and knows it too, that many among these leading Ranks are
 possessed

possessed of Qualities truly amiable: He only thinks, and hath asserted what he thinks, that they extend not their Views to distant or future Consequences; but heedlessly adopt a System of Manners, which, if unchecked in their Progress, will be attended with such Effects as they themselves would tremble to behold.

HE regards the Armies of *Great Britain*, as being less grossly vicious than in former Times: He applauds their Valour in particular Instances: But he points out, what all indifferent People acknowledge, that the ruling Character of the Times hath naturally drawn them into a System of Manners, which tends to the Destruction of military Spirit.

OF the same Kind are his Strictures on the Navy. Nay, here he acknowledgeth Instances of the most consummate Bravery.

He laments the public Act of their Country, which conspired with the Manners of the Times, and exposed these Gentlemen to the Temptations of Gain, in Preference to Views of Duty. He affirms, that their Remissness is not properly a *personal* Guilt, but the natural Effect of their *Situation*, in such a *Period*, and in such a *Nation*; for that “ they are brave, hardy, and intrepid, till they rise to the higher Commands; and then the Example and Manners of the Time infect them*.”

HE hath treated his own Profession with the same Freedom and Impartiality: But what is remarkable here, is, that while some cry aloud against him for his ill Usage of his own Profession, others affirm he hath done it more than Justice. For it seems, he hath affirmed that “ in the middle Ranks of this Profession there are more good Qualities found than in
“ any

“ any other.” This indeed he thinks is true ; and resolves it, not into the superior personal Virtue of the *Professors*, but into the Nature of the *Profession* itself ; which, among the middle Ranks, contains and presents stronger Motives to Virtue, and more effectual Bars to Vice, than any other Profession he knows of. Now, as he judgeth of the Virtues, so doth he judge of the Failings, or, if you will, the Vices of this Order. Personal Vices he never thought of meddling with, but only the Vices of Rank and Profession ; especially such as the Manners of the Times inflame. Now, it is manifest, that all those of this Profession, who “ converse with the World, “ and are supposed to make Part of it,” without Regard to their *particular Rank*, stand exposed to Temptations, Follies, and Vices, which the more retired Part of the Profession are not exposed to. In such a Case, it is hard to say, where
per-

personal and moral Guilt begins ; but this he adventures to say, that many well-meaning Men in the Profession may be involved in Manners and Habits which are consequentially pernicious, tho' seemingly innocent. This Conduct is often the Effect of Inattention : doubtless, it is sometimes the Result of deliberate Design : Where the Boundaries lie, the Writer pretends not to determine : neither indeed is it necessary for his main Purpose, that he should determine ; because his main Purpose was only to point out and prevent *Consequences* : And Consequences will equally arise, from any supposed System of Conduct, whether that Conduct ariseth from mere *Inattention*, or from moral *Depravity* of Heart.

WITH REGARD to the political Leaders of the People, every Man who reads his Work with an Eye of Candour and Impar-

partiality, will see that the general Drift of his Reasoning is of the same Kind. He hath represented the Great, as being too generally immersed in the Pursuit of Pleasure, or of Wealth for the Sake of Pleasure; inattentive to the Interests of the Public, but far from being void of private, moral, and personal Virtues. He acknowledges there are kind Fathers, Mothers, Sisters, Brothers, Friends*; Humanity to Distress he insists on as a ruling Feature of the Times†; and a general Spirit of Equity, in all Things that relate to private Property, between Man and Man. These Virtues, yet left among us, do not only form amiable Characters in the common Intercourses of private Life; but in his Opinion may form a fair Foundation on which to build those public Virtues, the Loss of which he affirms and laments‡. It is the Idea of a Public that,

* Vol, I. Part I. † Ib. ‡ Ib.

in his Opinion, is too generally lost : It is the Force of Religion that is too generally no more : It is the Principle of virtuous and public Honour, that in his Estimation is too generally dwindled into unmanly Vanity. Thus, while the Manners of the Times are in many Instances amiable and alluring, as they regard private Life and particular Connexions ; the great Bonds of public Strength, the Sinews of the Commonwealth, the Manners and Principles which should be the Soul of the State, should unite all its Members into one Body, vigorous, strong, and terrible to its Enemies, these, in his Opinion, have been relaxed into Weakness, and Dissolution.

NAY, even the great ruling Evil of parliamentary Influence, whose Effects, on the national Strength, he hath been so bold in disclosing ; and at which, he believes, the Great have taken most Offence ;—even this
ruling

ruling Evil, he believes, hath made its Progress in many Instances, through the mere Blindness, and Inattention of the Parties concerned ; who bent only on private Advantage, or perhaps actuated only by the Reputation and Honour annexed to an extensive Influence (a View no ways blameable while consistent with the Welfare of the Public) and not conscious of those Effects which naturally arose from such a Conduct, have often immersed themselves in all the Wretchedness of Party Violence and Borough-jobbing, without any ill Intention to the State. Nay, in many Cases, he makes no Doubt, but the very private *Virtues* of the *Man* have given Birth to the *Vices* of the *Politician*; and a misguided *Love* to Sons, Daughters, Friends, and Dependants, been the Source of political *Servitude* and Attachments, which, in their unseen or unregarded Effects, have been of the most fatal Consequence to the Com-

monweal ; by raising Men to public Offices of Trust and Importance, who were unequal to their Station both in Capacity, public Spirit, and other necessary Qualifications. But altho' he thinks thus of many of his Fellow Subjects, he cannot be so blindly credulous, as to think thus of all : He cannot doubt, but there are some, who would hire themselves out to sale, would obstruct wholesome Measures, would forward bad ones, in order to force themselves into lucrative Employments, and enrich themselves, their Families, and Dependants, tho' the Disorder or the Ruin of the State were the foreseen and certain Consequence. Yet, how many of these Characters may infest the Nation, or where such Characters are to be looked for, he neither hath affirmed, nor even insinuated. His Design was of a far different Nature, “ not to make personal Applications, but “ to trace acknowledged Facts to their un-
“ seen

“ seen Consequences.” Whether, therefore, dishonest Intentions were concerned or not, was of no essential Import to his capital Design; which was only to point out the *dangerous Effects* of such a ruling System of *Policy*, whether it was founded in *blameless* or in *wicked Intention*.

ON these Foundations then, my Lord, the Author of the Estimate rests his Defence. He affirms, what, indeed, the greater Part of his Readers are well satisfied of, that he never meant to stigmatize or point out personal Defects or Vices, but only those of Rank, of Profession, of the Times. He hath in Consequence of this Principle endeavoured to lay open the peculiar Defects incident to each Rank and Profession; but no where hath he designedly pointed out the particular Men which are chargeable with these Defects. So far is he from resolving these general Defects

or

or Vices into personal and deliberate Guilt, that he thinks it possible, that if the leading Ranks and the middle Ranks of the Nation were to change *Places*, they might change *Characters* too : That many of those who are now borne down by the Manners of the Times, might, thro' such a Change of Situation, stand entirely clear of them ; and many of those who now stand clear of them, might be over-whelmed by their prevailing Influence. But if the Writer was to estimate the moral Merit or Demerit of private and personal Characters (a Thing which came not within his Design) he would surely go another Way to Work : He would not weigh *Consequences*, so much as *Intentions* : He would consider, who were delinquent thro' *Inadvertence*, and who thro' *deliberate Design*. As he never did this ; as nothing of this Kind makes any Part of his Work ; as he hath in many Places declared the very contrary ; it
is

is evident, that he never meant to charge Individuals with moral Guilt ; but, in one Word, “ to estimate the Consequences of
 “ those Manners and Principles, in which
 “ the particular State of the Times hath
 “ naturally, in some Degree or other, involved *himself*, his *Friends*, and his
 “ COUNTRY.”

I FORESEE, my Lord, an Objection may rise to the Propriety of this Defence. It may be asked, “ If these Manners and
 “ Principles of the Times are properly
 “ treated here with *Gentleness*, why in the
 “ Estimate itself are they often treated with
 “ *Severity* ?”

THE Reply to this Objection, my Lord, is easy ; and not only consistent with the Nature of the Defence, but indeed essentially founded on it. In this Defence, the author hath considered the Manners and

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Prin-

Principles of the Times, as they affect the *Intentions* of those who are involved in them: their Intentions, he supposes, to be in many Instances, void of *deliberate* Guilt: therefore, when he regards them in this Light, he regards them as not chargeable with moral Profligacy, and therefore to be treated with *Gentleness*.

BUT in the Estimate itself, he considered the Manners and Principles of the Times, solely with regard to their *Consequences*. These, he thought, were pernicious, and fatal: and therefore the Manners and Principles which led to them, were, in his Opinion, to be displayed as being pernicious and fatal; and therefore, in this Regard, to be treated with *Severity*.

IT is farther urged, it seems, “ that
 “ the Writer hath acted with a blameable
 ‘ Partiality, in painting the ruling Fol-
 “ lies

“ lies and Vices of the Times with the
 “ utmost, and even aggravated Severity;
 “ but hath given few or no Virtues to
 “ compensate : whereas an Estimator of
 “ the Times ought to have been *impar-*
 “ *tial*; and should have *commended*, as
 “ well as *blamed*.”

That Men of Sense and knowledge
 should raise this objection, is not so easily ac-
 counted for. I can only suppose they take
 Things upon Trust, and have not read the
 Book. My Lord, the Writer hath given a Ca-
 talogue of Virtues, which adorn our Times
 and Country, so very favourable, that the
 only candid and decent adversary who hath
 yet appeared against him, thinks the Pic-
 ture, in one Circumstance, rather *flattering**.
 Hear what the Writer himself adds on this
 Subject in the second Volume. “ Let us do

* *Characteristics of the present political State of*
Great Britain, p. 203.

“ Justice to our Age and Country in every
 “ regard: a political Constitution, superior to
 “ all that History hath recorded, or present
 “ Times can boast: A religious Establish-
 “ ment, which breathes universal Chari-
 “ ty and Toleration. A Spirit of Liber-
 “ ty yet unconquered; a general Huma-
 “ nity and Sincerity, beyond any Na-
 “ tion upon Earth: an Administration of
 “ Justice, that hath even silenced Envy :--
 “ These are Blessings which every *Eng-*
 “ *lishman* feels, and ought to acknow-
 “ ledge.”—— Sure, my Lord, these are
 far from general and undistinguishing In-
 vectives against our Times and Country.
 Beyond this, the Writer hath expressly
 affirmed, that in every Rank, Order, and
 Profession, there are Men who stand dis-
 tinguished by their Capacity and Virtue.
 This Catalogue he could have drawn out
 by particular Panegyric: but in the View
 of Things, and with the Intentions with
 which

which he writ, a general Acknowledgment was sufficient; and such an *enlarged* Panegyric, however *just*, would have been highly *blameable*. It could have answered but two Purposes; to make himself a *favoured* Writer among the Great, when he meant to be an *honest* one; and to lull the higher Ranks in that *flattering Stupor* in which they were already sunk. The first of these he was not solicitous about: the second he held *dishonest*. Mankind were to be awakened and alarmed. This could not be done by dwelling on obsequious Representations. Soft and gentle Touches had been ineffectual: The Success of the Stroke depended on the Strength and Boldness. This was one of those particular Occasions, when it became his Duty, not only to *cry aloud*, but to *spare not*. The Diseases of the Times called for such a Conduct. The Season was favourable: it was the Hour of Sicknes, and the Time to alarm.

The national Distresses and Disgraces had already awakened the Fears of serious Men: This, then, was the Time to point out the *Causes* of the Mischief, and its *Cure*. These Fears were not confined to Men of Speculation and the Closet; but public Men and Ministers saw and avowed the ruling Evils; which were freely and boldly exposed in the Senate, as they have been by the Writer from the Press. This was the Time for honest Men of every Rank, to join with those Men of public Station in so laudable a Work, and to second and support their Endeavours for a general Reformation. The GREAT, then, were to be *rrouzed* from their *Lethargy*; the PEOPLE led to *see* the *Source* of Danger, and to *prevent* it. The View, therefore, was honest and laudable; the Means *dangerous only to him* that *used* them. The Writer may be found, indeed, to have judged ill

ill for himself, in the Language of worldly Prudence ; but a Man who risks what is commonly held most dear, from a conscientious and fixed Resolve to do what he thinks his Duty, may seem reasonably intitled, at least to the *Excuse* of those who wish to see good Manners and Principles prevail. Some, no Doubt, may think he hath acted an imprudent Part, and sacrificed his chief Interests : but it is a Mistake, my Lord : for he hath ever held his chief Interests to lie in a Perseverance in the Paths of Duty.

L E T T E R V.

SO much for the Writer's general Defence. You tell me next, my Lord, that some People have found the Appearance of an Inconsistency, “ While he delineates the Times as *selfish*, and yet admits them to be *friendly, charitable, and humane.*”

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THIS Objection ariseth (like most of the rest) from a Misapprehension of his Plan : His Design, was to consider the general Character of his Contemporaries, as they stand related to the *Public*. Now, in this Light he cannot but regard the general Character of the Times as *selfish*. We have not that real and generous Concern for the national Welfare, which we discover in Behalf of our *Friends*, or *Individuals* in *Distress*. Doth not the following Circumstance demonstrate the Truth of this Character ? That while large and generous Subscriptions are carried on for the Relief of all Manner of *private* Distress, most Men grudge what they are called upon to contribute toward the public Exigencies. They pay, when they are compelled to pay, with Murmurs and Reluctance. I mean this of the superior Ranks : The poor Farmer, Labourer, and Mechanic pays, without re-
his

pinning, the Taxes on his Candles, his Salt, and his Shoes, tho' they are Articles necessary to his Subsistence. But did the higher ranks shew their *public Zeal*, when the Wisdom of the Legislature chose that Article of Luxury, a *Coach* or *Chariot*, as proper to support a moderate Tax? Did each Man *press forward* to take his trifling Share of the general Burthen, and to contribute a Mite from his Abundance? When the Pomp of the loaded Side-board became another Object of a moderate Tax, did the Owners *rejoice* in this Opportunity of contributing to the *Wants* of the *Public*? Yet this was not only *called* by those who projected it, a *Tax upon Honour*, but in Reality it was so; since, in the very Nature of it, it could not be made *compulsory*. Those who knew the Manners of the Age foresaw and fore told the Consequences of it; and, in Fact, the *public Honour* of some among the Great was found, on
this

this Occasion, so equal to their *public Spirit*, that the Tax has produced a mere Trifle. Yet, it seems, the Sense of *Shame* could produce, what public Honour and public Spirit failed to produce; for I am told, that the Revenue arising from one of these taxes received a sudden and most astonishing Increase, from an Order of the House of C. that the Names of those who had paid it should be laid before them. Those who would neither obey the Law, nor support the Public, were afraid of being exposed to the Shame of having discovered that they failed in either : they were content to do what they were ashamed to have it said they had done. It is, in Truth, owing, in great Part to the same Turn of Thought, that so much Offence hath been taken, amongst the higher Ranks, at the Truths delivered in the *Estimate*. They see, the Representations there made are unfavourable to the Conduct, perhaps of themselves,

but

but at least, of many of their Friends, whose private Qualities they esteem and love: How their *public* Conduct affects the Interests of their *Country*, they seldom enlarge their Views so far as to consider: and hence, a Writer, who separates their *public Conduct* from their *private*, and considers the Actions of Men, ONLY as they regard his Country, cannot possibly fail of incurring their Displeasure. The Reason, my Lord, was assigned in the second Volume: “ Enlarged Views of Benevolence
 “ are quite beyond the Reach of such a
 “ People.”

L E T T E R

L E T T E R VI.

Y O U R Objections which follow next, are chiefly personal : However, as they have been *made*, they shall be *answered*. You say, my Lord, it hath been asked, “ Who appointed this Man a *national* Preacher ? ”—Now, this Expression is in Truth metaphorical : The literal and proper Manner of putting the Question, if any Doubt arises on the Matter, is this : “ Who gave this Man Authority to speak “ his Thoughts on national Affairs ? ”—When the Thought is thus divested of Figure, and given in mere literal Expression, you see, that any modest and sensible *Englishman* would blush to ask the Question. It is doubting of that common Right, which every *Englishman* demands, and is *possessed of*. This Privilege the Writer hath exerted in common with Hundreds

dreds of his Time and Nation. By what Motives other Men may have been determined, he leaves to themselves; for his own Part, he spoke, because he thought he saw the ruling Errors of his Country. 'Tis certain, that in Point of *Opinion* he hath a great *Majority* in his Favour: but he never expected to find that *Majority* among those Ranks, where the *ruling Errors* are supposed to *lie*. And if it be true, as the Writer often suggests, that all *national Failures* begin among the higher Ranks, 'tis certain, that a *declining* Nation may slide down to Ruin, before a *national Preacher* be in Form *appointed*: Or if he was, it may be presumed, his System of Manners and Principles would be somewhat curiously *modeled* and *prescribed*; and would be more likely to help forward the ruling Evils, than to cure them.

LET

LET us conclude then, my Lord, that whoever has the *Power*, has likewise the *Right*, to command the national Attention. There never was any Period in any State, where Reformatations of some Kind were not wanting. The great Point is, not as is commonly done, and with great Applause, to declaim, in a *vague* Manner, against the Iniquity of the Times, (a Kind of Rhetorick which strikes the *Ear*, but never the *Heart*) but to point out the *ruling Errors* and *Corruptions* with such a Particularity of Circumstance, that every Delinquent, in every Rank, shall see, and be made to feel, his own. This, my Lord, is the Way to awaken, to convince : thus alone the Mind and Conscience is turned upon itself : Few Men are so deliberately vile, as to withstand the Convictions of their own Reason : The great Source of *Wickedness* is *Self-deceit*. But this Method of convincing, the Writer was well aware,

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is a Task which (however useful to the Public) will bring no Favour to the Individual who undertakes it.

THE next Objection you tell me of, my Lord, may seem to wear a little more than this, the Face of Reason. The Objection is, that, “ considering the Writer’s
 “ private Station, he takes too much up-
 “ on himself in his Censures on the Great;
 “ that he is insolent, dogmatical, arrogant,
 “ assuming.”——With Regard to this, my Lord, the Writer protests, that so far as concerns himself, he is content to be thought as inconsiderable, as every Reader chooseth to make him in his own Eyes. He never obtruded any Authority but that of Reason: He desired the World only to read the Book, and weigh the Truth of it. If to be the Means of conveying some plain and necessary Truths to the World, without attacking the private Character of
 Individuals,

Individuals, be Insolence, Arrogance and Dogmatism, the Writer stands guilty of the Charge: But if this be not the case, if the Accusation be founded in the mere Want of those frequent and common *Apologies*, *Reserves*, *Exceptions*, *Salvo's* and *Douceurs*, by which Writers are apt to court the self-love or Malice of the World, and by which every Reader is happily prevented from *ap-plying* any thing to *himself*; The Writer apprehends, that in this Case he is not *as-suming*, but that he did his Duty in being explicit and *intelligible*.

THERE is, in this respect, an essential Difference between *Writing* and *Speaking*. The Speaker's private Rank and Character is necessarily attended to; because from his personal Presence, personal Considerations will (contrary to what is right) intermix themselves. A Writer, it hath been generally supposed, has the Privilege to be exempt from these personal Distinctions and Restraints; and if
he

he loses the Benefits of superior Station on one Hand, on the other the Want of them ought not to be imputed. On the public Stage, all those who address the Publick are, in Rank, equal : Or rather, it is the Province of *Reason*, and not of *Norroy King at Arms*, to determine their Superiority. Are the Follies and Vices attacked, of a public or private Nature ? If public, they are of public Cognizance ; and the Accuser is not to be told, that he has no Right to accuse, because he is of an inferior Station : It is enough, that he is a Fellow-Member of the Community. If the Happiness of his Country be at Stake, it matters not whether it be endangered by the Defects of the *Great* or *Vulgar*. In such a Case, the Point of *Ceremony* must give way to the *public Welfare* ; and the sole Question worth debating is only, whether the Author speaks the Truth in such a *Manner*, as may be

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of

of most *effectual Service* to his COUNTRY ? He gives in his Evidence and Proof to the great *Court* of Judicature, the *World* ; and this he hath a Right to do in the same *unreserved Manner*, whether the Ranks accused wear *Aprons, Bands, Cockades, or Coronets*. In a Word, the *Writer* of the *Estimate*, and the private *Man*, are in this Respect, two different Characters. The latter knows his Station, and hopes he conducts himself in it with Humility and Propriety. The Persons of the Great he treats with due Respect, and in Point of Decency, (and perhaps of Dignity too) maintains his Distance : As a Writer, he is a little more familiar with their Vices, when they interfere with the Welfare of his Country ; because *these* are not the Objects of his Reverence ; not even of his external Reverence, as they have no Place, Rank, or Titles of Honour legally annexed to them (that he knows of) in this
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Kingdom. As his Censures therefore are *general*, and nor *particular*, he thinks, he may arraign the *Vice*, and yet preserve due Respect to the *Man*.

HOWEVER; tho' he held this Principle of Conduct to be *necessary*, and therefore *just*; yet, like every other Principle, it certainly hath its proper Bounds: Nor does the Writer pretend to erect himself into an absolute Judge of the Propriety of his own Conduct, in every Instance. All that he is sure of, is only this; that what he writ in this Kind, was the pure Result of his preferring Truth and public Utility to the Favour of any Ranks or Individuals whatever: And if, in the Rapidity of Composition, any seeming Excesses of this Kind fell from his Pen; whoever may think they see such Excesses, will do him no more than Justice, if they ascribe them to

the Warmth of a well-intentioned Mind,
heated with the Importance of its Subject.

L E T T E R VII.

BUT you add, my Lord, that supposing the Representations just, which the Writer of the Estimate hath given of his Times and Country, it is farther objected, “ that as the Book has been translated into foreign Tongues, and made its Way on the *Continent*, it has given Advantage and Encouragement to our Enemies, by painting this Nation as being sunk in Effeminacy.”

ALAS! my Lord, our Enemies knew our Weakness and Degeneracy before: the national Disgraces had proclaimed it. As to the *Causes* and *Remedies* of this political Degeneracy, the Knowledge of these could only affect ourselves. We
might

might reap Advantage, (if we so pleased) by being led to the Knowledge and Sense of these: Our Enemies had already reaped all the Advantages of Information, from the mere Knowledge of the *Fact*. Is a Nation to go quietly down to Ruin, without one awakening Voice to rouse it from its fatal Lethargy, merely through Fear that our Enemies should take Advantage? They saw we were asleep: they had surprized and attacked us in our Slumber: Sure, it could not be dangerous or hurtful, to awaken from its Dream a Nation so exposed and attacked. Nor could it lessen that Nation in another's Eyes, to see there was one bold enough to attempt it.

BUT, it seems, "the Alarm was so strong, that it was in Danger of throwing the Nation from a State of blind *Security*, into a State of *Despair*."

THIS, my Lord, is the vague Language of undistinguishing Objectors; and favours little of the Knowledge of Human Nature. Would to God, the Feelings of the Guilty were so delicate; but to bring that Part of the Nation which was sunk in blind *Security*, to the opposite Extreme of *Despair*, is, by no Means, an easy Task. There are many intermediate Periods to be gone through, of Doubt, Suspicion, Fear, Despondency, 'ere the dissolute Mind can arrive at this Extreme. Rouze the Secure and Luxurious as severely as you can, you will hardly awaken them into the *first* Stage of *Doubt*. A Twitch by the Ear, or the Scratch of a Pin, may be felt by a People whose *Sensibility* is *strong*; while their lethargic Leaders, sunk in Indolence of Manners, may be Proof against the Application of red-hot *Pincers*.

THIS

THIS, my Lord, is a clear Reply, with regard to the higher Ranks, and Leaders of the People: With respect to the People themselves, the thinking Part had already been awakened into *Fear*, if not to *Despondency*, by the *public Disgraces*. I repeat it, my Lord, that “ the Nation stood aghast at its own
 “ Misfortunes ; but like a Man, starting
 “ suddenly from Sleep, by the Noise of
 “ some approaching Ruin, knew neither
 “ whence it came, nor how to avoid it *.”

What then was the Consequence of this Book ? It was, to investigate the real *Causes* of those national Disgraces which had alarmed us ; and, together with the *Causes*, to suggest the *Cure*. Could this tend to drive a People to *Despair* ? On the contrary, it naturally led them to a rational and lively *Hope* : For, together with the ruling Evils, the natural Remedy was pointed out. My Lord, the Na-

* Vol. I. p. 150.

tion *saw* the *Remedy*; they have *claimed* it, and already feel its powerful *Effects*.

L E T T E R VIII.

YOUR Lordship says, it is farther objected, that “ if the Substance of the
 “ Work was true, whence could such
 “ Clamours arise against it, even among
 “ any Rank or Party of Men?”

THE Objections already stated by your Lordship, afford a Reply, in part, to this general Question.—Worthy Men may have taken Offence at the Work, from a Consciousness of their own innocent Intentions, and a Misapprehension of the Author’s main Design: They see not the Consequences of those Manners in which they are involved; and therefore may think it unjust, that these Consequences should be charged upon their Conduct, which is in-

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tentionally blameless.—Farther, that sparing Hand, with which the Author thought it necessary to mingle Panegyric in his Work, hath undoubtedly been the Occasion of much Discontent.—Again, the open and unreserved Manner in which the Estimate is written; the seeming Danger of telling so much political Truth to the World, supposing the Representations true; —All these, my Lord, have been undoubtedly regarded as improper or imprudent Steps; and declaimed against, as such, by Men of good Intentions.

FOR a Reply to these Objections, your Lordship is referred to the preceding Letters. There are other Causes of Clamour, I apprehend, of a very different Nature; and I will point out these with the same Freedom.

ONE Source of Clamour hath been the obstinate Blindness of the *dissolute*, in every Rank and Station ; who, being determined to proceed in the beaten Track of Pleasure, without Regard to Consequences, do therefore naturally dislike those who display them.

AGAIN, my Lord, the more Truth appears in a Work of this Nature, by which the Interests of Individuals are so nearly affected, the more Enemies the Work must have among a certain Party of Men : I mean all that Party who look no farther than themselves, and are watching to plunder the Public for their own private Emolument. How large a Party this may be, or where they may lie, the Writer leaves to your Lordship to determine. 'Tis enough to observe here, that these Men, seeing their own Plans of selfish Interest

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obstructed by the open Avowal of the Truths thrown out so freely to the Public in this Estimate, must naturally rise against the Author, and fasten upon him like a Nest of *Hornets*.

BESIDES these Causes of Offence and Clamour, I will beg Leave to whisper another in your Lordship's Ear : It is a Secret, my Lord, which you Great People are not often given to hear or understand : Many of the Dependants of the Great, and whom they are pleased to call their *Friends*, are in Truth no more than their *Flatterers* in Disguise. They have not that generous Regard to the real Advantage of their Lords and Masters, which they so zealously pretend : Their own Interest is the Compass they steer by : they are therefore glad to take Advantage of the common Partialties of human Nature, to disgrace

grace all Men in the Opinions of those whom they seem to serve, who dare point out to them even the *Semblance* of an *Error*.

LETTER. IX.

YOU tell me farther, my Lord, that
 “ a particular Passage hath given
 “ much Offence to the Universities and
 “ their Friends ; in which a general Cen-
 “ sure is thrown on the Heads of Col-
 “ leges.”

ON this, therefore, the Author thinks it necessary to explain himself more particularly ; as no Man entertains a truer Regard to the real Honour and Welfare of these learned Bodies, than himself.

WITH Regard, therefore, to what he apprehends to be the most material Part
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of the supposed Charge against these Gentlemen, that is, “ their not sufficiently re-
 “ collecting the original Purpose of Col-
 “ lege Government;” he finds that his
 Meaning hath been strangely mistaken or
 perverted. He was not, in that Passage,
 questioning the *legal* and *statutable Admini-*
stration, but pointing out the *defective Form*
 of our College-Institutions ; and proposing
 a Method, by which their Defects might
 in some Measure be remedied, thro’ the
voluntary Care and Superintendence of the
Heads, in certain Circumstances, to which
 he believes they *are not obliged* by *Statute*.
 He had been pointing out the Use and
 Necessity of a Subordination of *Instructors* ;
 in which, *one* Party should be an *As-*
sistance and a *Check* to another ; and brought
 the *great Schools*, as Examples (in some
 Degree) of this proposed Method of In-
 struction. Whoever considers this Circum-
 stance here insisted on, will find it of the
 last

last Consequence in all public Institutions : It keeps all Parties *alive* and *active* in their respective Spheres ; who, without these awakening *Checks*, are apt to slide down into *unsuspected* Negligence. Now, the general Want of these continued and subordinate Checks, are, in his Opinion, a capital Defect in our University Establishments. He therefore took, what he thinks an allowable Freedom, in pointing out this ruling Defect : Which, as it is not generally obviated by the Governors of Colleges, as they do not regard it as a Part of their Office, to instruct either the Tutors or the Pupils, he could not resolve this Omission into any Cause more excusable, than their “ not recollecting the “ *original Purpose* of College Government.”

As to the general Causes of this *Inattention*, which in the Writer's Opinion,
implies

implies no positive Demerit*, he supposes it to arise from Imperfections common to Men, and to Men of Worth and Probity; as explained in the Beginning of this Defence†. With Regard to certain particular Attentions hinted at, more especially to Cards and Entertainments; if, formerly, some growing Attentions of this Kind fell under his Observation in one of the Universities, such as the worthiest Men might inadvertently fall into, he is informed that they are now ceased. His Remark, therefore, not being applicable to the present Time, becomes a Mistake in Point of Fact; and as such he freely devotes and offers it up, a voluntary Sacrifice to Truth and Justice: leaving it to those who are *infallible*, to upbraid him with the Acknowledgment of an *Error*.

* This was manifestly imply'd in the subsequent Paragraph, where the Author declared, he meant no *personal Invektive*.

† See Letter III.

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L E T T E R. X.

I PROCEED, my Lord, to your last Objection. It seems, “ The Freedom
 “ with which the Character of a famous
 “ Minister is treated, hath been the Oc-
 “ casion of much Offence to his Friends
 “ and Adherents, which form a large and
 “ powerful Party in this Kingdom.”

As to the mere Matter of *Offence*, my Lord, there is no preventing it in certain Cases. But if the Writer was to calculate *Numbers* on this Occasion, he finds the *Majority* would consist of those who think he hath treated the Character of this Minister at least with *sufficient Lenity*. 'Tis certainly a Kind of Presumption in his Favour, that one Part of the Nation thinks he hath allowed *too little* ; and others, *too much*, to this deceased Minister.

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BE that as it may ; the Investigation of this Minister's Principles and Conduct is certainly of national Concern : It is of great Importance to this Kingdom, that it be known whether his political System be *salutary* or *destructive* : therefore the Character of his Administration not only *may*, but *ought* to be freely and fairly canvassed, for the Conviction and Benefit of the Whole.

HAD the Writer treated this Minister's Character with Contempt, there had been some Pretence for Blame : As he studiously avoided every thing of this Kind, he cannot but be astonished, that Men of Candour and fair Intentions can be offended at his cool and dispassionate Reasonings on this Subject. He never entertained any personal Dislike to this Minister, his Friends, or Adherents. On the contrary, he knows some of them to be Men of Worth and Honour, the Friends of Liberty and their

F Country ;

Country; and for whose Characters, he were both unjust and insensible if he had not the highest Deference: If he differs from these Gentlemen in Point of Opinion, they are satisfied he does it from the Convictions of his own Reason. They know, he proceeds on the same Principles of Liberty with themselves; that he only dissents in his Conclusions; and are too just and generous, to dislike him for throwing out his Sentiments so freely, on a Subject of such Importance.

Is the Writer mistaken in his Opinions concerning the Conduct of this Minister? The Press is open to every body: Why then is *Clamour* spread, instead of rational *Confutation*? To tie down the Nation to this System, to forbid or discourage rational Inquiry into its Tendency, would be to erect a political Tyranny in the State. If it is clear then, that the Writer's Intentions

tions are honest, the Friends of this Minister will find it equitable to make Allowance for Difference in Opinion. What they contend for in *Religion*, will they deny in *Politics*? Certainly, my Lord, the Maxims of *arbitrary Power* sit with the worst Grace on the declared Patrons of *Freedom*:

IT were perhaps unfair to charge any of the more *generous* Part of this deceased Minister's Friends, with joyning in the Clamours raised on this Occasion. That no candid and equitable Mind can be disgusted at his Conduct, he concludes from the generous Professions of a late Writer, so nearly connected with this Minister, that his Evidence must be allowed above all Suspicion. " This Freedom of Discussion
 " on the Dead of any Rank, or however
 " consecrated by the Authority of great
 " Names, or even by the Esteem of Ages,
 F 2 " every

“ every Man ought to be at Liberty to ex-
 “ ercise. The greatest Men certainly may
 “ be mistaken ; so may even the Judgment
 “ of Ages, which often takes Opinions
 “ upon Trust. No Authority, under Di-
 “ vine, is too great to be called in Que-
 “ stion : And however venerable Mo-
 “ narchy may be in a State, no Man ever
 “ wished to see the Government of Let-
 “ ters, under any Form but that of a *Re-*
 “ *public*. As a Citizen of that Common-
 “ wealth, I propose my Sentiments for
 “ the Revision of any Decree, of any ho-
 “ norary Sentence, as *I think fit* : My Fel-
 “ low Citizens, *equally free*, will vote ac-
 “ cording to their Opinions *.”—Such are
 this Gentleman’s free and generous Prin-
 ciples on the like Occasion : And the Wri-
 ter is well persuaded, that this honourable
 Person is too equitable to refuse that Pri-
 vilege to another, which he so rationally
 assumes to himself. L E T-

* Preface to Mr. WALPOLE’s Catalogue of royal
 and noble Authors.

L E T T E R. XI.

OTHERS, it seems, my Lord, “ think
 “ it somewhat strange that a Man
 “ should step out of his own Profession,
 “ and engage in a Province in which he
 “ was no way particularly bound to con-
 “ cern himself.”

IN reply to this, my Lord, several Con-
 siderations may be alledged. The Writer
 perhaps might content himself with the
 old Apology of “ *Homo sum ; humani nihil*
 “ *a me alienum puto :*” He may alledge,
 that as the Causes of the Duration of the
 State are the main Object of his Enquiry,
 the Preservation of the *Christian* and *Pro-*
testant Religion become, among other
 Things, the natural Objects of his Atten-
 tion and Pursuit. Above all, my Lord, he
 insists, that the *System* of *Policy*, which he
 recommends and enforces, is not only *re-*
ligious, but *moral* : and therefore, to en-

deavour to establish this System, is to endeavour to establish the public Happiness of Mankind on the solid Basis of *Virtue*, which is the *End of Religion itself*. He therefore thinks, that both in *this*, and in the Pursuit of his *greater Plan*, he is, to the utmost of his Power, serving the Cause and End of Religion and Christianity; the main Drift of his general Design being only to prove, that the most effectual Way to render Kingdoms *happy, great, and durable*, is to make them *virtuous, just, and good*. In this Point he confirms himself on the Authority of an excellent Prelate, whose political Researches were of like Tendency.

“ As the Sum of human Happiness is supposed to consist in the Goods of Mind,
 “ Body and Fortune, I would fain make
 “ my Studies of some Use to Mankind,
 “ with Regard to each of these three Particulars; and hope, it will not be thought
 “ faulty or indecent in any Man, of what
 “ Pro-

“ Profession foever, to offer his Mite to-
 “ wards improving the *Manners*, Health,
 “ and Prosperity of his Fellow-Creatures*.”

L E T T E R X I I .

SUCH, then, my Lord, is the Writer’s
 Reply to the several Objections which
 you tell me have been urged against his
 Estimate. How far it may be satisfactory
 he pretends not to determine; but leaves
 every Man to weigh it with candid Free-
 dom.

GIVE me Leave now, my Lord, to close
 this Defence with a few Observations,
 which may still farther tend to clear the
 Doubts of those who have started the Ob-
 jections.

LET them consider, my Lord, that in a
 Subject so wide, multifarious, and compli-

* Dr. *Berkley’s Misc.* p. 118.

cated, as that of the Manners and Principles of a wealthy and luxurious Nation, there are not perhaps two Individuals of that Nation, whose Opinions do altogether coincide. Every Man that examines such a Subject, proceeds not only on a View of *Facts*, but on a Set of *Principles* too, in some Degree *different* from those of every other. The Body of the Nation, which hath been so partial in Favour of this Estimate, should they compare their particular Opinions, would find them widely different in many Circumstances: and those among the higher Ranks who have dissented, should they enter into the same critical and minute Comparifon of each others Thoughts, would find them equally discordant. If so, my Lord; is not here a manifest Reason for mutual Forbearance, where Opinions clash? And who will deny that it was a Task of the greatest Difficulty, to steer thro' such a Sea of Doubt,

Doubt, where (though the Facts lie open to every Man's Observation) every Man forms an Opinion peculiar to himself. The great Outlines, the essential Truths, the leading Principles of such a Work may be acknowledged to be just by Thousands, who, amidst that infinite Variety of Circumstances glanced at in the Course of it, may have particular Opinions different from the Author and each other. All, therefore, that a modest Writer will pretend in such a Case to give, or a modest Reader expect to *find*, will be *a good deal of Truth, and a little Error.*

IN Consequence of this, my Lord, consider farther, how often and how naturally particular Passages must necessarily be objected to, in such a Work, while the general Truths and leading Principles, on which the Work is founded, are totally overlooked. For every Reader erects him-
self

self into a Judge of the *particular* Remarks made, and pronounces on them by the Standard of his own Judgment, formed upon his own Observation and Principles : While, among the Multitude of Readers, even of those who mean well, an extended Discernment of Things, and the Comprehension of a *general Plan*, is not always to be found. How easy a Task then, my Lord, and how natural to weak, to vain, or ungenerous Minds, to throw out Objections to particular *Parts*, without any Regard had to the main *Tenor*, *Extent*, and *Disposition* of the *Whole* ?

BESIDES the Nature of the Subject, there was a farther Difficulty, arising from the Danger either of *too general*, or *too particular Expression*. Had the Writer declaimed in a vague and undistinguishing Manner, on the Errors and Vices of the Times, he had failed of his main Intent, which was, to
point

point out *where* the ruling Errors and Vices lay: Had he singled out *Individuals*, he had justly incurred the Censure of *personal* Invektive. What then was left for him to do? He only saw one proper Expedient; which was, to give the predominant or leading Character of the several Ranks concerned; yet to admit (in general Terms) that in each Rank there were *Exceptions* to this leading Character. The very Intention of his Work forbad him to *dwell* at large on these *Exceptions* *: And besides this main Reason, another presented itself: Had he *professedly* singled out every Individual in every Rank and Station, whose Conduct deserved Praise; those who had been passed in Silence, might probably have upbraided him with personal Reproach. He judged it best, therefore, in general Terms, to admit *Exceptions*, but to leave

* See above, Letter IV. p. 37.

it to every Man's particular Judgment, to determine *where* these *Exceptions* lay.

L E T T E R XIII.

THUS, my Lord, the Writer hath endeavoured to explain and defend his Estimate; in which he needed not to have been so sollicitous, had it been true what it seems, hath been insinuated to your Lordship, that “ the Work is not properly
 “ his own; that he hath only delivered
 “ the Sentiments of other Men, and been
 “ the mere Instrument of conveying their
 “ Principles to the Public.” But he here assures your Lordship, in the most solemn Manner, that the whole of this Estimate was the sole Result of his own Reason, uninfluenced by the Advice, or Direction of any Friend whatever: And that, indeed, he thought the Subject of so delicate a Nature, that it would have been

ungenerous to have involved any Friend in
 the personal Consequences which he fore-
 saw it might produce. Had no disagree-
 able Effects attended the Publication, he
 should not have judged it necessary to
 make this Avowal; but as the Clamour
 and Displeasure of certain Ranks have been
 the Consequence of its Appearance and
 Success, he thinks it a Duty incumbent on
 him to clear every Friend of this ground-
 less Imputation; and declares, that what-
 ever may appear in it either inadvertent,
 or erroneous, the Whole is to be at-
 tributed to himself alone; to the Over-
 flowings of his own Zeal, thrown out to
 the World without Disguise, Expectation,
 or Fear; and bent, not against *Persons*,
 but against the predominant Errors, Fol-
 lies, and Vices of his Time and Country.
 His Work hath had the Fate which
 might reasonably be expected: it hath
 been *read, approved, dissented from, and*
reviled.

reviled. For the Conviction of those who have candidly *dissented*, the Publication of these Letters may be of Use: But when the Writer considers, by WHOM his Work hath been *approved*, and by WHOM *reviled*, as the first of these Parties *desire* no Reply, so the latter *deserve* none: They have *both* done his Work all the Honour that is in their Power to give; and he cannot but esteem its Fate to have been *peculiarly happy*. The worst that he wishes to his worst Enemy, is *Honesty* and a *better Mind*.

UPON the whole, my Lord, the Writer can but declare his upright Intentions, and leave the World to judge of their Propriety and Success. He would desire his Countrymen to remember the generous Maxim of a true Politician, “ that a Patriot will
 “ admit there may be honest Men, and
 “ that honest Men may differ :” And that,
 “ where

“ where the Heart is right, there is true Patriotism *.” He knows, it is the Principle of many good Men, that all Attempts towards *Innovation*, of whatever Kind, are dangerous. For himself, he is of a different Opinion: He thinks that *seeming Innovation* is, in many Cases, no more than the necessary Means of *preventing* a gradual and unsuspected *Change* of Things for the worse, which inevitably steals on in every State, if not checked by timely and resolute Applications.

So far is the Writer from imagining, with the Herd of Politicians, that there is no Virtue nor good Intention in any but those who approve that System of Politicks which He espouses; that on the contrary, he makes no Doubt, but some of the Great, who had not the Courage to combat the ruling Evils of the Times, wished sincerely to compass such an End, but judged the

* Dr. Berkley's *Maxims*.

End unattainable. He is, therefore, the more surpris'd that Individuals should take Offence at this Part of his Work, because it is pointed, not against the Conduct of Individuals, but against the common and ruling Errors of the Times. He believes there are upright Men of all Parties, and only wishes they would believe so of one another. His Approbation or Disapprobation is not of *Men*, but *Measures*: And he is well persuaded, that many of those who once thought the present Measures of Government *impracticable*, begin now to see the *Possibility*, as well as the great *Importance* of carrying on the public Affairs, on a higher Principle than that of *venal Influence*.

So sudden and so great is the Change in the Appearance of our public Affairs, in Consequence of this sudden and courageous Check given to the ruling Manners and Principles of the Times, that the Writer

ter hath been seriously asked, “ Whether
 “ the rising Courage of the Nation, our for-
 “ midable Armaments, and the gallant Spi-
 “ rit of several young Men of Fashion and
 “ Fortune, are not so many Confutations
 “ of the Principles advanced in the *Esti-*
 “ *mate*?” Seriously, my Lord, the Writer
 of the *Estimate* is right glad to be so CON-
 FUTED. Had these Appearances risen be-
 fore the Publication of his Work, he might
 justly have been accused of Partiality and
 Misrepresentation. But as it is confessed,
 that these Appearances are but now *rising*,
 he will only desire his Objectors to look
 back to the *Estimate* itself, and consider whe-
 ther they are not *rising* on the very Principles
 there *urged, delineated, and foretold*. The
 Writer did indeed believe, he foresaw, nay
 he foretold, that “ NECESSITY alone could
 “ bring back effeminate and unprincipled
 “ Minds from their Attachments to Gain
 “ and Pleasure*.” Nay, he foretold the

* Vol. I. p. 220.

very Means : “ The Voice of an *uncor-*
rupt People, and a GREAT MINISTER †.”
 Cast your Eye back, my Lord, to no very
 distant Day, and be You the Judge, what
 was the *Distress*, and what the *Necessity* of
 the Time : Had not a general Dissolution
 of Manners and of Principle disordered,
 nay, almost unhinged the State ? This it
 was, that united the *Voice*, the *legal Re-*
presentations, of an uncorrupted People :
 That united Voice, *steady*, not *factionous*—
loyal, yet *couragious*—was heard and ap-
 proved by a GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN : The
expected Minister was found ; and a *coercive*
Power hath thus appeared from the *Throne*,
 sufficient to controul the Blindness and
 Folly of the dissolute and thoughtless a-
 mong the higher Ranks, and to lead them
 to *salutary Measures* and their own *Safety*.

MARK the Effects of this uniting Power :
private Good gives Way to *public* : the se-

† Vol. I. p. 221.

veral Ranks assume a Spirit and *Fervor* unknown before : Fear of *Shame*, and Thirst of *Honour*, begin to spread thro' our *Fleets* and *Armies* ; and our growing *Youth* seem already to catch the kindling *Fire*. In a Word, the national Strength is awakened, and called forth into Action : The GENIUS of BRITAIN seems rising as from the *Grave* : he shakes himself from the *Dust*, assumes his ancient *Port*, and *Majesty* of Empire, and goes forth in his Might to *overwhelm* our *Enemies*.

I CANNOT conclude, my Lord, without seriously recommending to your particular Notice and Regard, two Observations, (which contain, indeed, the Substance and End of the *Estimate* itself) arising from the present State of our public Affairs. The first is, that by proper Exertions and well-directed Applications, the ruling *Evils* of an *effeminate Period* may be controuled : The Second is, that under our present Constitution,

tion, the national Affairs may be carried on with *Honour* to the *Crown* and *Success* to the *Kingdom* (a Truth which, not long ago, many serious Men did not believe) on a higher Principle than that of *corrupt Influence*.

HOWEVER, let us not be intoxicated with the Appearances of Success: The Tree may *blossom*, and yet be *blasted*. The ruling Defects and Evils of the Times are for the present *controuled* indeed, but not *extirpated*. The Remedy, tho' it begins to take Effect, is yet no more than *temporary*: The Distemper *lurks*, tho' the Symptoms begin to *vanish*. Let those who wish well to their Country, then, be watchful, and prepared against a Relapse. 'Tis *something*, to have *check'd* the *Disease* at its *Crisis*; the perfect *Cure* will require the *Attention* and *Labour* of an *Age*.

F I N I S.

